

**WATER SUPPLY OPERATOR CERTIFICATION
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**September 14, 2016, 12:00 P.M.
Capital 2 Room, 3rd Floor
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield, IL**

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 pm, following lunch being served at noon.

Advisory board members present were:

Wayne Nelson, Curran-Gardner Water District/OpCert Advisory Board Chair
Chris Johnson, Wade – Trim Operations Services
Cindy Munger, Aqua Illinois
Dennis Ross, Otter Lake Water Commission

Also in attendance were the following:

Mark Britton, IEPA/Division of Public Water Supplies
Paul Connelly, IEPA/Division of Public Water Supplies
Tatum DeMay, IEPA/Division of Public Water Supplies
Todd R. Folder/Village of Rochester
Drew Hoelschur, Environmental Resources Training Center
Dave McMillan, IEPA/Division of Public Water Supplies
Joanne Olsen, IEPA/Division of Legal Counsel
Andrea Rhodes, IEPA/Division of Public Water Supplies
Paul Shetley, Environmental Resources Training Center

Wayne N. thanked IPWSOA for making all the arrangements for the meeting and luncheon. Everyone present introduced themselves and identified their affiliation.

Cindy M. put forward a motion to accept the minutes from the March 22, 2016 Advisory Board meeting, it was seconded by Chris J. and passed unanimously by the Board.

The Chair opened discussion for old business. Joanne O. reported that the Part 681 Rule is ready to go to first notice; final approval might be expected March/April 2017. Among the items mentioned were the drinking water (DW) operator exam formula sheet; the reconciliation of the 681 regulations with the Public Water Supplies Operations Act specific to reverse osmosis treatment (the Act indicates this process to be a Class A process regardless of source water type), the grace period for reclassified A plant water operators to obtain Class A certification, clarification of the certification application process, reciprocity for DW operators who received water operator training in the US Armed Forces, and the change to specify five hours for DW operator testing.

IEPA asked the Board to review the revised forms for “Examination Request Drinking Water Operator Certification”; “Application for Certification as a Community Water Supply Operator” with a new instruction sheet, worksheets for calculation of Class A, B, C, and D hands-on experience; “Drinking Water Supply Operator Certification Experience Requirements Explained” with a table “Experience Equivalence Criteria”; and, “Application for Reciprocity Certification as a Community Water Supply Operator”. Discussion involved the new Operator-In-Training certification and full DW operator certification.

Discussion turned to calculation of hands-on experience for DW certification as illustrated in the revised IEPA OpCert forms: calculation and documentation for logging hours for various DW operator tasks on the worksheets; defining “active monitoring” in the calculation of logged hands-on hours; logging part-time hours; conversion of experience hours into equivalency credits; the use of weeks of experience and hours of credit in the formulas to count experience for initial certification; and, uniformity between calculation of renewal training credit hours and initial certification credit hours in educational courses. The Board expressed some concerns and requested clarification on calculation of hours/weeks for operator certification experience requirements, and IEPA agreed that they would take it under further consideration and possible revision if needed for further review by the Board.

The topic “Testing into the 21st Century” was opened for discussion. IEPA asked the Board to consider what appears to be impending changes in drinking water supply operator testing. Administration of DW exams may undergo changes to fewer testing centers, be administered electronically and in a more automated manner, and possibly administered/proctored through non-state employee staff. The Board discussed how testing has been done in other States.

Paul S. and Drew H. from Environmental Resources Training Center provided an update regarding funding and operation of the Water Quality Control Operations Program, its current status for Title IV Federal financial aid and the appeal to the Department of Education to continue student assistance; student loans; and the influx of students due to local out-of-work personnel and the Workforce Investment Act.

The next Advisory Board meeting was scheduled during the upcoming ISAWWA WaterCon on March 20, 2017.

IEPA asked the Board to review the revised Part 604 regarding water treatment plant design, operation, and maintenance standards, and hopefully a first outreach could be sent out in 30 – 60 days.

The motion to adjourn was presented; it was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.